

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:EHURWITZ:FLW

APPROVED BY P - MR. HABIB

EA - MR. GLEYSTEN

S/S-O:LRMACFARLANE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 130427

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, US

SUBJECT: KOREAN AMBASSADOR CALLS ON UNDERSECRETARY HABIB

1. AMBASSADOR KIM YONG-SIK CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON UNDER-
SECRETARY HABIB JUNE 3 CHIEFLY TO DISCUSS HABIB'S RECENT
TRIP TO SEOUL.

2. HABIB NOTED THAT HIS AND GENERAL BROWN'S CONSULTATIONS
IN SEOUL ON GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL HAD GONE WELL. BOTH
SIDES WOULD NOW WORK OUT THE DETAILS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL
PROCESS. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS COULD
BE AGREED ON DURING SECRETARY BROWN'S TRIP TO SEOUL IN
JULY FOR THE SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING.

3. KIM SAID THAT HIS REPORTS FROM SEOUL ALSO INDICATED
THAT THE CONSULTATIONS WENT WELL; ACCORDING TO THE MINUTES
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OF THE MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT PARK, BOTH THE U.S. AND
KOREAN SIDES HAD PRESENTED THEIR VIEWS IN AACTITICULATBEEN
AND POSITIVE MANNER. HE ASKED WHAT U.S.REACTION HAD BEEN
TO PRESIDENT PARK'S REQUEST THAT THE BULK OF TWO BRIGADES
BE RETAINED IN KOREA UNTIL THE LAST WITHDRAWAL IS MADE.
HABIB SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL WOULD RECEIVE
DUE CONSIDERATION.

4. KIM ASKED WHEN THE 4-5 YEAR PERIOD FOR WITHDRAWAL WOULD COMMENCE. HABIB REPLIED THAT IT MIGHT BEGIN AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SCM, WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS MARKING THE END OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS. HABIB SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE VERIFIED. KIM WONDERED WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE ANY FLEXIBILITY IN THE FOUR TO FIVE YEAR PERIOD SET FOR THE WITHDRAWAL, ADDING THAT PERHAPS IT COULD BE EXPANDED TO FIVE AND A HALF TO SIX YEARS. HABIB SAID WE WOULD STAND ON THE PERIOD OF FOUR TO FIVE YEARS FIXED BY THE PRESIDENT.

5. ASKED ABOUT THE JAPANESE REACTIONS DURING THE TOKYO CONSULTATIONS, HABIB SAID THAT THE JAPANESE, LIKE THE KOREANS, WOULD CLEARLY HAVE PREFERRED NO TROOP WITHDRAWALS. HOWEVER, THEY TOOK THE REALISTIC POSITION THAT, WHILE THEY OBVIOUSLY HAD A DEEP INTEREST IN THE MATTER, IT WAS ONE TO BE DECIDED BY THE U.S. AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

6. KIM ASKED ABOUT THE REACTIONS OF THE SOVIETS AND CHINESE TO OUR TROOP WITHDRAWAL PLANS. HABIB REPLIED THAT WE HAD RECEIVED NO REACTION FROM THEM. WE HAVE CONVEYED TO THEM OUR EXPECTATION THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO RESTRAIN NORTH KOREA. AS IS GENERALLY THE CASE WHEN WE DISCUSS THE KOREAN ISSUE WITH MOSCOW AND PEKING, NEITHER SIDE MADE ANY SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE.

7. KIM SAID THAT THE ROKG HAD BEEN PLEASED WITH HABIB'S DEPARTURE STATEMENT AFTER THE CONSULTATION VISIT AND
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ITS STRONG REAFFIRMATION OF THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO KOREA'S SECURITY. HABIB NOTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED THAT SUCH REAFFIRMATION BE MADE. KIM WONDERED WHETHER THE SECRETARY IN HIS FORTHCOMING SPEECH TO THE ASIA SOCIETY MIGHT MAKE A SIMILAR REAFFIRMATION. HABIB SAID THAT THE SPEECH WAS NOW BEING DRAFTED AND THAT KIM COULD BE SURE THAT THE ISSUE WOULD BE HANDLED APPROPRIATELY.

8. KIM SUGGESTED THAT THE SECRETARY MIGHT VISIT SEOUL ON HIS RETURN FROM HIS TRIP TO PEKING. HABIB NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD BEEN TRAVELING A GREAT DEAL AND HAD NOT CONSIDERED ANY SIDE TRIPS DURING PEKING VISIT. KIM SAID HE HOPED SUCH A TRIP COULD BE MADE TO VISIBLY DEMONSTRATE OUR CLOSE BILATERAL TIES. VANCE

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